

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for real-time communication among two or more individuals separated in space, comprising the steps of:

determining that a first individual is likely to be interested in communicating with a second individual via a first communications link;

retrieving information via the first communications link about one or more additional individuals from electronic memory means associated with the second individual; and

establishing communication with at least one of the additional individuals based on the retrieved information.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining that a first individual is likely to be interested in communicating with a second individual via a first communications link comprises the step of:

establishing communication between the first individual and the second individual.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the communication established between the first and second individuals is carried out by telephony.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the communication established between the first and second individuals is by real-time telephony.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein the communication established between the first and second individuals comprises exchanges of voice mail messages.

5

10

15

20

LAW OFFICES

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON,
FARABOW, GARRETT,
& DUNNER, L.L.P.
1300 I STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005
202-408-4000

6. The method of claim 2, wherein the communication established between the first and second individuals comprises exchanges of text messages.

7. The method of claim 2, wherein the first and second individuals communicate via real-time video.

8. The method of claim 2, wherein the first and second individuals communicate via interactive real-time text communication.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining that a first individual is likely to be interested in communicating with a second individual comprises the steps of:

displaying a representation associated with the second individual to the first individual; and

selecting the representation by the first individual.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the information retrieved from electronic memory means associated with the second individual is organized in a personal directory included in the electronic means.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the information about one or more individuals in the personal directory is entered manually by the second individual.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the information in the memory is obtained by observing previous communications between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory.

5

10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
60
65
70
75
80
85
90
95
100
105
110
115
120
125
130
135
140
145
150
155
160
165
170
175
180
185
190
195
200
205
210
215
220
225
230
235
240
245
250
255
260
265
270
275
280
285
290
295
300
305
310
315
320
325
330
335
340
345
350
355
360
365
370
375
380
385
390
395
400
405
410
415
420
425
430
435
440
445
450
455
460
465
470
475
480
485
490
495
500
505
510
515
520
525
530
535
540
545
550
555
560
565
570
575
580
585
590
595
600
605
610
615
620
625
630
635
640
645
650
655
660
665
670
675
680
685
690
695
700
705
710
715
720
725
730
735
740
745
750
755
760
765
770
775
780
785
790
795
800
805
810
815
820
825
830
835
840
845
850
855
860
865
870
875
880
885
890
895
900
905
910
915
920
925
930
935
940
945
950
955
960
965
970
975
980
985
990
995

A

20

LAW OFFICES

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON,
FARABOW, GARRETT,
& DUNNER, L.L.P.
1300 I STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005
202-408-4000

A

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the information is organized in a personal directory included in the electronic memory.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the communication established between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory is carried out by telephony.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the communication established between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory is by real-time telephony.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the communication established between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory comprises exchanges of voice messages.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein the communication established between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory comprises exchanges of text messages.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory is by real-time video.

19. The method of claim 12, wherein the communication established between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory communicate via interactive real-time text.

20. The method of claim 12 wherein from observing previous communications between the second individual and one of the individuals in the memory, the frequency with which the second individual communicates with the individuals in the memory is

5

10
15

20

A

28. The method of claim 13, wherein the second individual sets permissions associated to the access of the personal directory by others.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the permissions set allow the personal directory associated with the second individual to be accessed by the public.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein the permissions set allow the personal directory associated with the second individual to be accessed by specific persons or group of persons designated by the second individual.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein the permissions set make public a plurality of individual records, each record containing information corresponding to each of the at least one individuals.

32. The method of claim 28, wherein the permissions set make available, to specific persons or group of persons, a plurality of individual records, each record containing information corresponding to each of the at least one individuals.

33. The method of claim 28, wherein the permissions set for a given directory vary according to a mode of use in a collaborative conferencing session.

34. A collaborative conferencing system comprising:

a large virtual space room;

a display for displaying in real-time a representation of only those persons in the virtual space room who have been defined as likely to be interesting; and

means for establishing communications with the persons in the virtual space room.

35. The system of claim 34, wherein the representation of persons includes information about the persons.

36. The system of claim 34, wherein the collaborative conferencing system is set to a mode of random casual conferencing, the random mode enabling the communication between two persons that seek an interesting but otherwise random conversation.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication comprises two-way audio conferencing.

38. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication comprises two-way interactive text communication.

39. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication comprises email exchange between the two persons.

40. The method of claim 36, wherein the communication comprises voice mail message exchanges between the persons.

41. A collaborative conferencing system comprising:

a large virtual space room comprised of persons from the general public or from private groups or organizations;

a display for displaying in real-time a representation of persons from the virtual space room; and

means for establishing communications with the persons in the virtual space room.

42. The system of claim 41, wherein the communications can be established via text conferencing or via audio conferencing.

43. The system of claim 42, wherein the group of persons that form the virtual room are partitioned into subgroups.

44. The system of claim 43, wherein persons in a subgroup only communicate with persons within that subgroup.

45. The system of claim 44, wherein a person in a subgroup can transfer to another subgroup after looking at the existence of other subgroups in the display and determining another subgroup of interest.

5

600130-132130

LAW OFFICES

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON,
FARABOW, GARRETT,
& DUNNER, L.L.P.
1300 I STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005
202-408-4000